



# CNI



***Spurgeon's College, London is one of the UK's leading Baptist theological colleges.***

## **Irish Baptist to be principal of Spurgeon's College**

A former British Army chaplain has been appointed as the new principal of one of the UK's leading Baptist seminaries, Spurgeon's College.

The Rev Prof Philip McCormack MBE will serve as Spurgeon's College's next principal beginning September 1 2017, the college announced [last week](#).

McCormack is currently a senior chaplain in the British Army, delivering pastoral care and spiritual support to military recruits, and training future chaplains. He is also a widely-published author and academic, specialising in the field of ethics.

He said: 'I am humbled and thrilled to be appointed as the next Principal of Spurgeon's College. I look forward to working with an outstanding college team whose enthusiasm for the life, work and ministry of the college is inspiring.

'Working together with our national Baptist church family, the wider Christian community in London and internationally, I am convinced that Spurgeons' reputation as a world-class leader in preparing Christians for service in the Kingdom of God will continue to flourish and expand.'

McCormack succeeds Rev Dr Roger Standing, who became the college principal in 2013. The institution was founded by famed preacher Charles Spurgeon just six years after his 1850 conversion. In Spurgeon's lifetime, the college



***Philip McCormack is a distinguished academic, Army chaplain and Baptist minister.***

trained nearly 900 ministers and planted 200 new churches in Britain. It describes its mission as providing a 'Christ-centred, biblically-rooted training in discipleship for the practice of mission and ministry'.

Rev David Kerrigan, chair of the college council, applauded the move. 'I am delighted that Philip has been appointed principal elect of Spurgeon's. He brings to the post significant

experience of senior leadership. We found his vision for the future of the college compelling and look forward with anticipation to working with him,' he said.

Sarah King, the chair of governors, called McCormack a 'gifted leader and a clear strategic thinker with an exciting vision for the future of the college as it seeks to support the Baptist movement, both locally and nationally, and works ecumenically to equip churches, especially those with black and minority ethnic and Pentecostal identities, in London and the South East. As a board, we look forward to working with him.'

## **C of I bishops express grave concerns about primary schools in Republic**

**The C of I bishops whose dioceses include schools in the Republic on Thursday last issued an extensive statement regarding the ethos and identity of the schools under C of I patronage.**

In the statement they made the following comments:

“Church of Ireland primary schools are embedded among communities across the country and have a long-standing tradition of being inclusive, of welcoming pupils from widely differing faith traditions and many from backgrounds of no faith at all. Church of Ireland schools are child-centred, co-educational and are faith based, Christian in ethos.

“The Christian faith acknowledges the value and uniqueness of every human being and demands that each individual is treated with respect, kindness and love. A Christian ethos demands of its school that every child should be enabled to flourish and that every child understands the importance of striving to reach their potential with integrity and humility.

“Schools under Church of Ireland patronage are democratically run with parents, teachers and the church community in partnership providing an inclusive, effective and comprehensive curriculum with an attractive ethos that responds to the academic, cultural, personal and spiritual needs of pupils.

“While the Church of Ireland ethos permeates all aspects of the education of the pupils, the schools under Church of Ireland patronage work to take those moral and personal values which

are strongest in Christian faith and promote those values amongst the entire student body regardless of their faith background. Many non-religious parents choose schools under Church of Ireland patronage as they see the ethos of Church of Ireland schools as an attractive moral and spiritual framework within which they wish their children to be educated.

“It is difficult to reconcile what we know and experience about the schools under Church of Ireland patronage with much of the public debate around school admissions and primary education in general. In recent years, faith schools have been poorly served, at times, by news media. Too often, there is a failure to ensure that hyperbole and opinion are counter balanced with evidence based facts.”

## **The Minister's Proposals**

**Commenting specifically on the Minister's proposals, the bishops stated:**

“We are given to understand that the Minister has received over one hundred submissions from schools under Church of Ireland patronage from across the country. Each school has expressed concern and alarm at the Ministers proposals. This is a very strong voice from the

members of our community which must be heard and recognised.

“The Minister, in his speech at the launch of his consultation process, stated that “given the make-up of the population, if a Protestant or an Islamic primary school for example was prohibited from using religion as an admissions criterion, it is hard to see how it could maintain an ethos among its school community and remain a school of that religion in any real sense.” And yet, that is what the Minister’s proposals envisage.

“Seeking to radically undermine the legal protections which support the provision of faith based education by religious minorities in Ireland will do little for equality or fairness in Irish education. There are other administrative approaches that the Minister can take to address the challenges proposed in the very limited areas where oversubscription to schools and lack of capacity are creating difficulties. Not one school place will be added to the education system if any of these proposals are implemented.

“Changing the admissions rules as proposed will do nothing to increase resources in specific areas. Instead the change will merely create a

new cohort of children who are excluded from education within their own faith.”

Church of Ireland schools important component of Church of Ireland communities

The bishops statement concludes with this analysis:

“Church of Ireland schools are an important component of Church of Ireland communities and other Christian minority communities throughout the country. They provide an invaluable focal point for a faith community which is usually widely dispersed geographically. Church of Ireland schools enjoy a strong link with their community and there exists a strong interdependence socially, spiritually and very often practically. Many Church of Ireland schools owe their very existence and their subsequent development over generations to the generous and unwavering support of their parish and the wider Church of Ireland community. To prevent a Church of Ireland school from prioritising children from that community will lead to a splintering and a diminishing of that link causing hurt, confusion and disillusionment. The rights of a minority denomination should not be trampled on in a race towards a populist understanding of pluralism.



“As the patrons of school which cater for a minority Christian denomination in Irish society, we respect the rights of other minority groups to express their opinions and we believe that any view that seeks to bring a human rights perspective must also be pluralistic in outlook. There are practical difficulties in the giving effect to the rights of parents who wish to exercise their Constitutional right to opt their children out of religious education. As patrons, we know that schools work hard not to allow any child to feel excluded on the basis their (or their parents) beliefs. We look forward to continuing our engagement with the Department of Education and Skills in its work to facilitate parental choice in the Irish education system within available resources.”

The signatory bishops are: The Most Rev Dr RL Clarke, Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop of Armagh.; The Most Rev Dr MJ StA Jackson, Primate of Ireland, Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough; The Most Rev P Storey, Bishop of Meath and Kildare; The Rt Rev J McDowell, Bishop of Clogher; The Rt Rev KR Good, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe; The Rt Rev F Glenfield, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh; The Rt Rev PW Rooke, Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry; The Rt Rev MAJ Burrows, Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory; The Rt Rev Dr WP Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross; The Rt Rev Dr K Kearon, Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert and Aghadoe



*At the annual Diocesan Chrism Eucharist in the Cathedral Church of St Fachtna, Rosscarbery, County Cork were (l-r) Canon Trevor Lester, The Very Reverend Nigel Dunne (Dean of Cork), Canon Eithne Lynch, the Very Reverend Christopher Peters (Dean of Ross), the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Venerable Adrian Wilkinson (Archdeacon of Cork, Cloyne and Ross), and, Canon Paul Willoughby (Diocesan Representative Canon at the National Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St Patrick, Dublin)*

**‘Vulnerability is part of Christian Ministry’**

Bishop Paul Colton at Annual Diocesan Chrism Eucharist. Sermon preached by the Bishop...

<https://churchofirelandcork.com/2017/04/13/vulnerability-is-part-of-christian-ministry-bishop-paul-colton-at-annual-diocesan-chrism-eucharist/>

## **Mass of the Lord's Supper Homily**

Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry

<http://www.derrydiocese.org/news/entry/news/mass-of-the-lords-supper-homily-bishop-donal>

## **Donegal Church of Ireland to host bake sale in aid of cancer support group**

The Church of Ireland Parish Centre is to host a bake sale and coffee morning on Easter Saturday between 10am-2pm.

<https://www.donegalnow.com/features/donegal-church-ireland-host-bake-sale-aid-cancer-support-group/156214>

## **Chester cathedral to host sixth Grand Organ marathon**

Chester Cathedral has announced that its sixth Grand Organ Marathon will take place on 16 September 2017.

The cathedral is looking for up to 20 enthusiastic amateur organists to take part in the event, which will also include a performance from

theatre organist and BBC Radio 2 presenter Nigel Ogden.

The 12-hour event will start at 9am. All proceeds will go towards the Grand Organ Appeal, which is aiming to raise the £1m needed to rebuild the cathedral's 141-year-old instrument.

Philip Rushforth, director of music at Chester Cathedral, said: 'I wholeheartedly look forward to welcoming our guest organists as they prepare to entertain us for 12 non-stop hours with diverse and exciting music choices.'

Anyone interested in performing should [click here to register their interest](#).

[www.chestercathedral.com](http://www.chestercathedral.com)

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